

Pack to head up the U.S. Agency for Global Media. This typically is a job that doesn't get a whole lot of attention here on the Senate floor, but this time, I believe it should.

This is yet another Trump nominee who appears to be covering up a whole array of sketchy financial wheeling and self-dealing, and apparently my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are just looking the other way, not interested.

So here is the short version of the story. For more than a decade, Mr. Pack ran two entities—a nonprofit film organization and a for-profit production company. His nonprofit raised millions of dollars under its tax-exempt status, and it pumped that money into his for-profit production company, nowhere else. At a minimum, this looks to me like a serious, flagrant abuse of a taxpayer subsidy. Mr. Pack made false statements about this arrangement to the IRS. So as the ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee, I care greatly about that matter if one were to look at nothing else.

When he was first nominated in the previous Congress, Mr. Pack got caught in these false statements by staff on the Foreign Relations Committee. When he was renominated in this Congress and submitted new paperwork, he made false statements about having made false statements. Truly astounding.

Now there are a host of unanswered questions about Mr. Pack's murky financial dealings. Fortunately, Ranking Member MENENDEZ is still trying to get to the bottom of this. Now, Ranking Member MENENDEZ is doing his job by the book. He is doing his job. He has been in communication with the administration when it comes to the vetting process for the nominees and, every step along the way, has tried to do responsible vetting.

Furthermore, the financial web of Mr. Pack is under investigation by the Attorney General of the District of Columbia. Why not wait to get the results of that investigation? Why rush to confirm a nominee before all the facts are before the Senate? This is a question over whether a nominee broke the law and ripped off taxpayers.

When Democrats on the Senate committee of jurisdiction tried to investigate it, Mr. Pack told everybody to just go pound sand. So once again, we have a Trump nominee making a mockery of the Senate constitutional responsibility, and as far as I can tell, the Senate is just going to do nothing about it.

(Mr. YOUNG assumed the Chair.)

For my last few minutes, I just want to remind colleagues of the way things used to be. The way it used to be is both sides of the Senate took advice and consent seriously. For example, in 2009, Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member GRASSLEY held up one nominee and wrote an exhaustive 12-page memo over a matter of \$53 in local tax late fees and some sloppy paperwork. An-

other 2009 nomination, Ron Kirk, to be the U.S. Trade Representative, was held up for months over a tax matter involving some basketball tickets and a television he donated to his local YMCA. In 2010, another nominee was grilled in his hearing before the Finance Committee over a tax debt of \$800.

Senators on both sides of the aisle—both sides of the aisle—always tried to do a thorough vetting and tried to work on it together. In all three of these cases, which I remember as a member of the Finance Committee, the nominees answered the Senate's questions, paid what they owed, and that was that. The Senate did its job, and it was the right thing to do.

I think as we move to the vote here in the Senate, we ought to start talking about one question, and that is this: What has changed in the Senate about the vetting process of these nominees? What happened to the old bipartisan commitment to advise and consent, to fully vet nominees? The majority has just rubberstamped and rubberstamped some more. Trump nominees show a blatant disregard and disdain for the oversight process that historically has been central to the bipartisan work of this body.

Now the President might be totally indifferent to the role and duties of the Senate, but I don't see any reason why Senators here, Democrats or Republicans, have to agree with that. It undermines the role of this Senate and the Congress as a coequal branch of government. The precedent of a bipartisan vetting process simply cannot withstand it.

It has been said here before that the Federal Government doesn't need anybody so badly that the person should get a special set of rules. That, regrettably, is the way it seems to be for this nominee—a nominee whose finances are currently under investigation and, apparently, with the majority's support, is going to get confirmed because the majority has decided to essentially set aside years and years of bipartisan work, responsible work, to thoroughly investigate and vet those who are nominated to serve in our government.

I am going to oppose this nomination, and I hope my colleagues will think about what is really at issue here, because what goes around comes around. Is the Senate going to get serious about the way matters used to be handled, particularly on the Senate Finance Committee, since we have a member of our committee in the Presiding Officer's chair? The Senate Finance Committee did it right, did it right for years, by the books, in a bipartisan fashion. That is not being used here; in fact, it is being tossed out the window. I think the Senate is going to regret it. I urge my colleagues to oppose the nominee.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I would like 3 minutes to close the debate on Michael Pack.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF MICHAEL PACK

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President and fellow Senators, we are about to do the final vote on Michael Pack. This man is uniquely qualified to hold this position. He has done an outstanding job. Everyone should look at the most recent documentary he did on the Supreme Court. It was just outstanding.

There has been a political fight over him for 2 years and 1 day. Today is the moment of truth. It is time to vote on Mr. Pack. Debate is closed.

I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON PACK NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pack nomination?

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 113 Ex.]

#### YEAS—53

Alexander	Daines	Lee
Barrasso	Enzi	Loeffler
Blackburn	Ernst	Manchin
Blunt	Fischer	McConnell
Boozman	Gardner	McSally
Braun	Graham	Moran
Capito	Grassley	Murkowski
Cassidy	Hawley	Paul
Collins	Hoeven	Perdue
Cornyn	Hyde-Smith	Portman
Cotton	Inhofe	Risch
Cramer	Johnson	Roberts
Crapo	Kennedy	Romney
Cruz	Lankford	Rounds